



Opening a Civil Case

Case Information

Civil cases can be opened and filing fees can be paid within the System.

After successfully logging into ECF, follow the steps below to open a new civil case:

STEP	RESULT								
1. Select Civil from the blue menu bar at the top of the ECF screen. The Civil Event window opens displaying all of the categories from which you may choose for your filing. Click Civil Case .									
2. Fill out the screen as directed in the table below:									
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Office:</td><td>Select the place of trial requested in the complaint.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Case type:</td><td>Use cv.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Lead case number:</td><td>Leave blank.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Association type:</td><td>Leave unchanged.</td></tr> </table>	Office:	Select the place of trial requested in the complaint.	Case type:	Use cv .	Lead case number:	Leave blank.	Association type:	Leave unchanged.	
Office:	Select the place of trial requested in the complaint.								
Case type:	Use cv .								
Lead case number:	Leave blank.								
Association type:	Leave unchanged.								

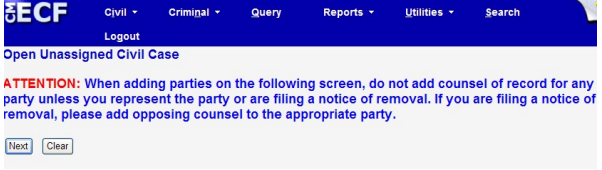
STEP		RESULT
Other court name:	If this case relates to another federal court case in Nebraska, enter USDC-NE . If you are filing a Notice of Removal, enter the other court name.	
Other court number:	If this case relates to another federal court case in Nebraska, or you are filing a notice of removal, enter the case number of the related case.	
JPML number	Leave blank.	
Related cases:	Leave blank.	

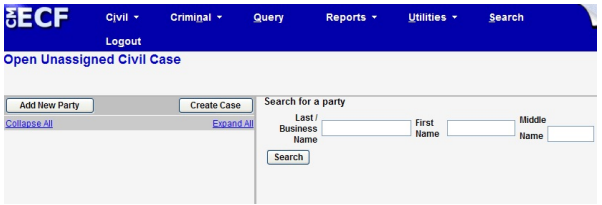
3. Fill in the Civil Cover Sheet information as directed by the table below:

Note: You do NOT need to file a copy of the civil cover sheet.

Jurisdiction:	See civil cover sheet instructions.
Cause of action:	See civil cover sheet instructions.
Nature of suit:	See civil cover sheet instructions.
Origin:	See civil cover sheet instructions.
Citizenship of plaintiff:	Only used for diversity cases.

Citizenship of defendant:	Only used for diversity cases.								
Jury demand:	Select the party demanding a jury.								
Class action:	Do not use. Leave as "n." The court will modify this information if the class action is approved.								
Demand (\$000):	Leave blank.								
Arbitration Code:	Leave blank.								
County:	Select the county of residence of the plaintiff, unless the plaintiff is the USA, in which case select the county of residence of the defendant.								
Fee status:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>IF you are...</th> <th>THEN...</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>a governmental agency</td> <td>select wv (waived)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>filing in forma pauperis</td> <td>select fp (in forma pauperis)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>all other filings</td> <td>select pd (paid)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	IF you are...	THEN...	a governmental agency	select wv (waived)	filing in forma pauperis	select fp (in forma pauperis)	all other filings	select pd (paid)
IF you are...	THEN...								
a governmental agency	select wv (waived)								
filing in forma pauperis	select fp (in forma pauperis)								
all other filings	select pd (paid)								
Fee date:	Leave as current date.								
Date transfer:	Leave blank.								

STEP	RESULT
4. This screen serves as a reminder to only add attorneys for parties that you will be representing. Do not add opposing counsel on the following screens unless this is a Notice of Removal.	

STEP	RESULT
5. Add parties to the case following the steps in the Add Parties procedure.	

Adding Parties to a Case


Overview

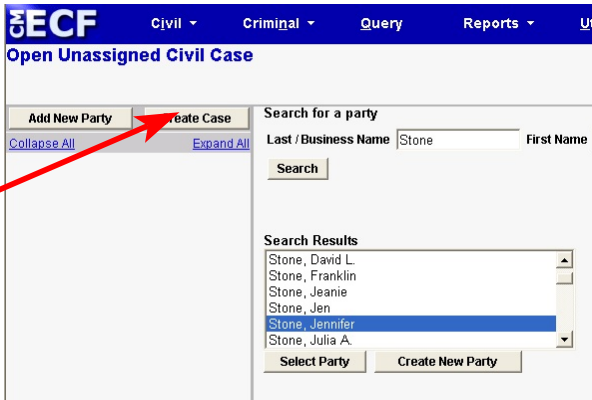
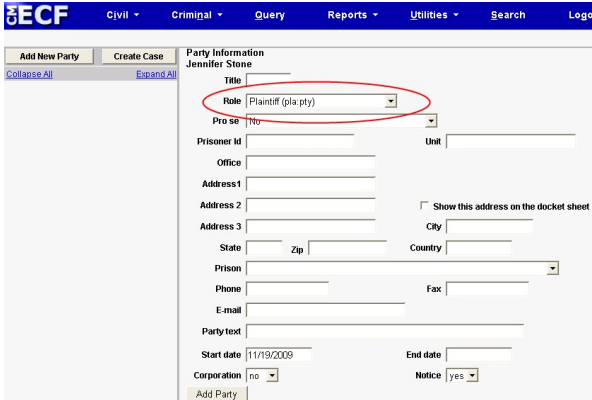
This procedure details the five steps for adding a party to a case, which are:




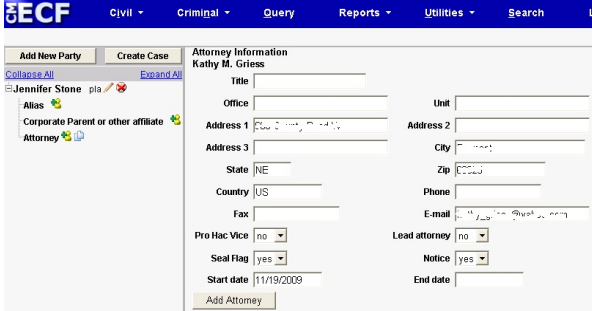
1. Search for the party by name.
 2. Verify or enter the party name.
 3. Select the party's role in the case.
 4. Add aliases for the party, if any.
 5. Select attorneys for the party, if known.
- Repeat these steps for each party in the case.




Procedure

For demonstration purposes, the first plaintiff and the plaintiff's attorney will be added to a case in this procedure. Repeat the steps to add additional parties.

STEP	RESULT
<p>1. Starting with the first plaintiff, search by typing the plaintiff's last name or the business name, and then click Search.</p> <p><i>For this example, Jennifer A. Stone is being added as a party, so we searched for "Stone."</i></p>	

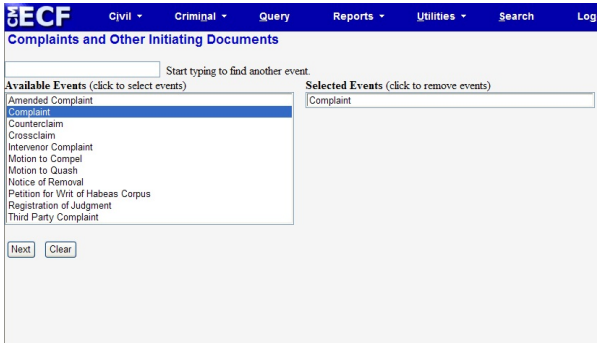

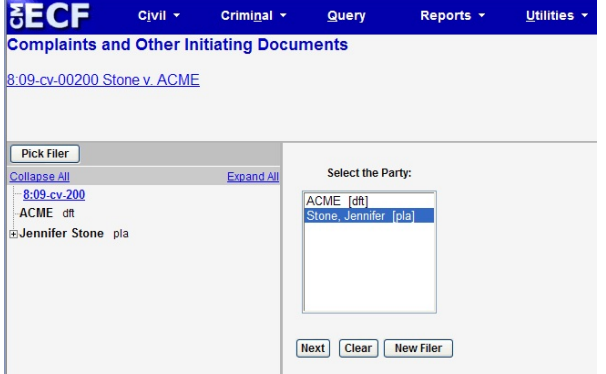
STEP	RESULT
<p>2. If the party is listed in the results field, click on the name and then click Select Party. Otherwise, click Create New Party.</p> <p><i>Since Jennifer Stone is listed among the results, we will click the Select Party button.</i></p>	
<p>3. On the Party Information screen you should only fill out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first, middle and last name (if a business, the entire business name goes into the Last name field), • the role of the party, and • party text, if any. (Note: The Party Text field is used for additional information about the party, such as <i>a minor child, next friend of..., or in his role as...</i>) <p>DO NOT add address information or e-mail addresses for parties.</p> <p><i>Don't forget to change the role to plaintiff!</i></p> <p>4. Click Add Party.</p>	

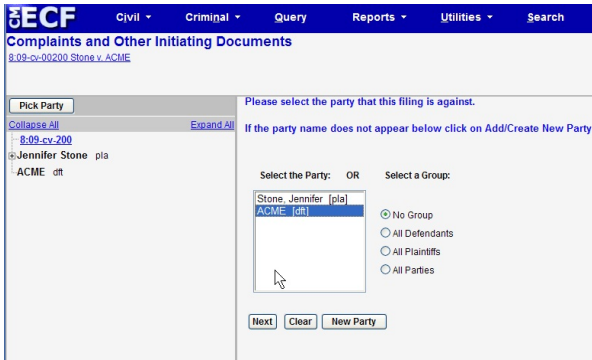
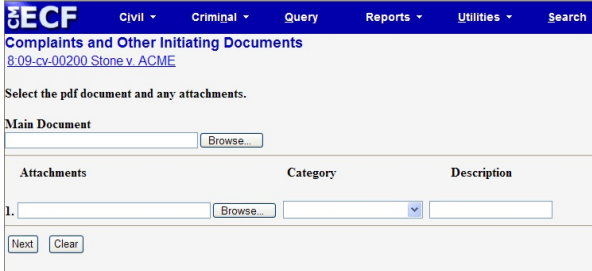
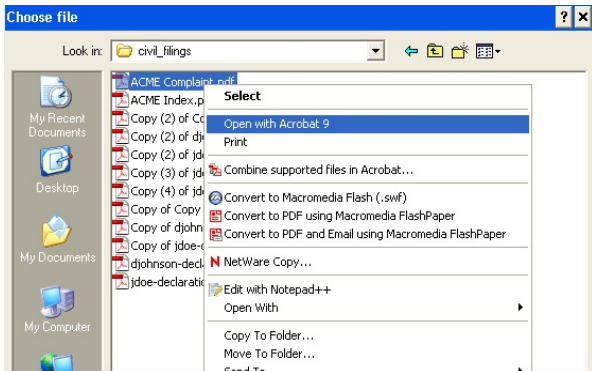
STEP	RESULT
<p>The party now displays in the “tree” on the left side of the Add Party screen.</p> <p>5. To add aliases, Corporate Parents, or attorneys for the party, use the Add  icons.</p> <p><i>We want to add an attorney for our plaintiff, so we will click the Add icon next to Attorney.</i></p>	
<p>6. Search for the attorney by typing the Bar Id or the attorney’s last name.</p> <p><i>For this example, we will add Kathy Griess as the attorney.</i></p>	
<p>7. Select the attorney’s name from the results list and then click Select Attorney.</p> <p>8. Do not change any fields on the Attorney Information screen. Click Add Attorney.</p>	

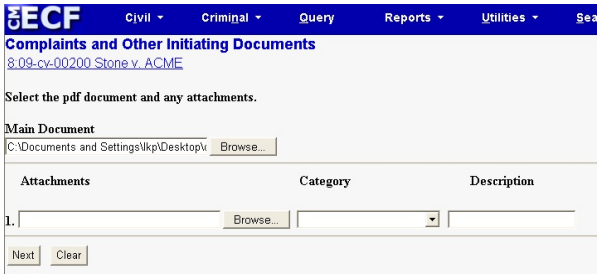

STEP	RESULT
<p>9. The attorney now appears in the “tree” view on the left of the screen under the plaintiff. Repeat steps 6-8 to add all attorneys for this plaintiff.</p>	 <p>The screenshot shows the ECF system interface. At the top, there's a blue header with 'ECF' and navigation tabs for 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', and 'Reports'. Below the header, there are two buttons: 'Add New Party' and 'Create Case'. Under 'Add New Party', there are links for 'Collapse All' and 'Expand All'. A tree view is displayed under 'Jennifer Stone' (pl). The tree includes 'Alias', 'Corporate Parent or other affiliate', and 'Attorney'. Under 'Attorney', there is an entry for 'Kathy M. Griess' with edit and delete icons.</p>
<p>10. Click Add New Party, then repeat steps 1-9 until all parties and all known attorneys have been added to the case. When finished adding all parties and attorneys, click Create Case.</p>	 <p>The screenshot shows the ECF system interface. The 'Add New Party' button is circled in red. The 'Create Case' button is also visible. To the right, there is a search bar labeled 'Search for a party' with a sub-label 'Last / Business Name' and a 'Search' button. The tree view on the left shows 'Jennifer Stone' (pla) with 'Alias', 'Corporate Parent or other affiliate', and 'Attorney' entries. Under 'Attorney', there is an entry for 'Kathy M. Griess'. Below that, there is an entry for 'ACME' (dft) with 'Alias', 'Corporate Parent or other affiliate', and 'Attorney' entries.</p>
<p>11. Your case has been opened and the case number has been assigned. But you are not done yet! Make a note of the case number, then click Docket Lead Event? to upload the necessary case opening document(s) and pay the filing fee.</p>	 <p>The screenshot shows the ECF system interface. At the top, there's a blue header with 'ECF' and navigation tabs for 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', 'Reports', 'Utilities', 'Search', and 'Logout'. Below the header, there is a message: 'Open Unassigned Civil Case'. Below this message, there is a link: 'Click on Docket Lead Event to continue opening your case. THIS CASE IS NOT OPENED UNTIL LEAD EVENT IS FILED AND FILING FEE IS PAID OR A MOTION TO PROCEED IN FORMA PAUPERIS IS FILED.' Below this link, there is a message: 'Case Number 09-200 has been opened.' Below this message, there is a link: 'Docket Lead Event?'.</p>

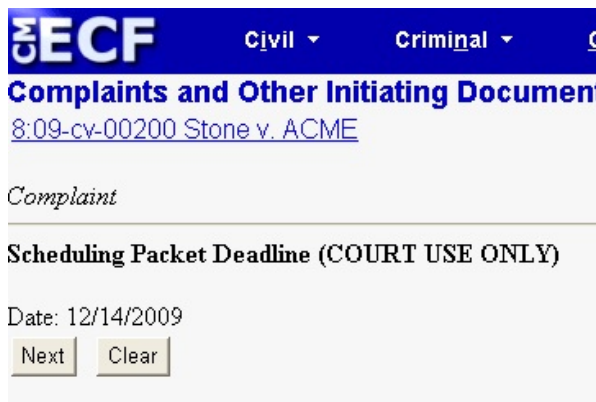
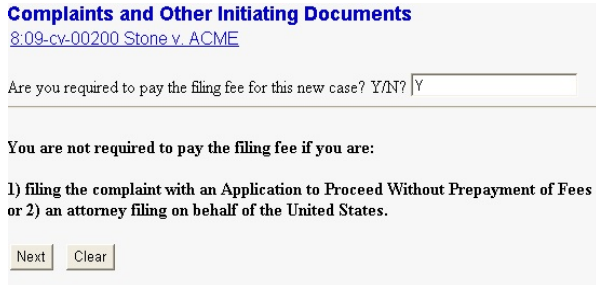
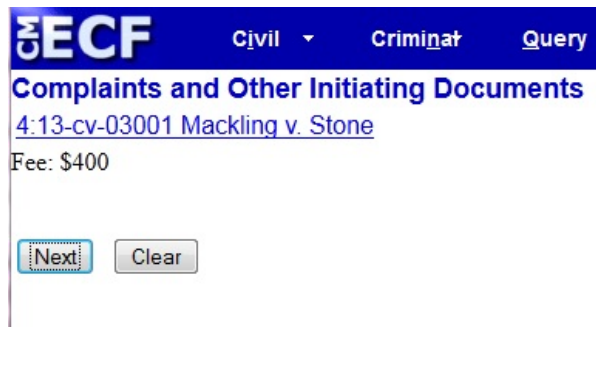
Filing a Complaint (or other case opening document)

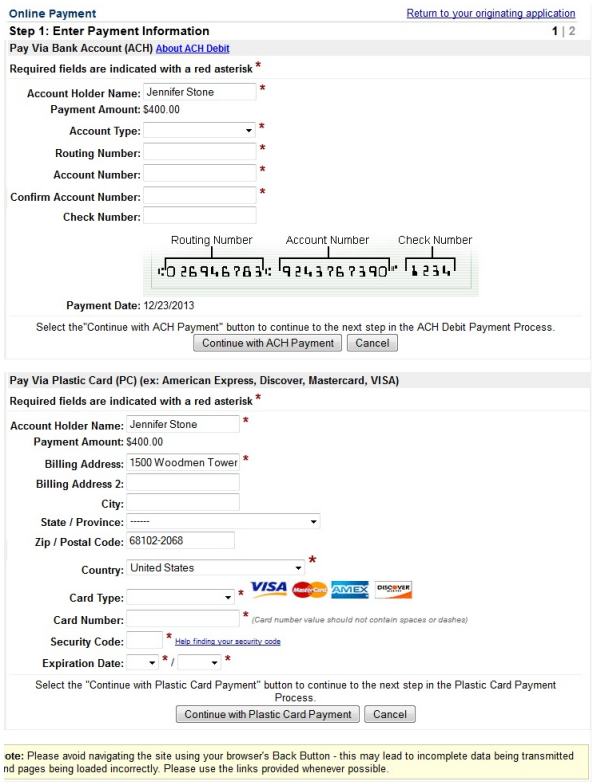
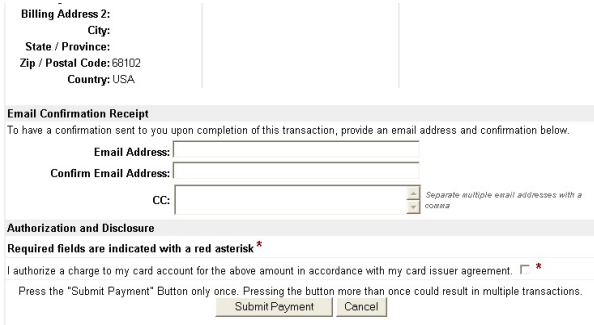
Follow the steps in the table below to file the complaint and pay the filing fee:

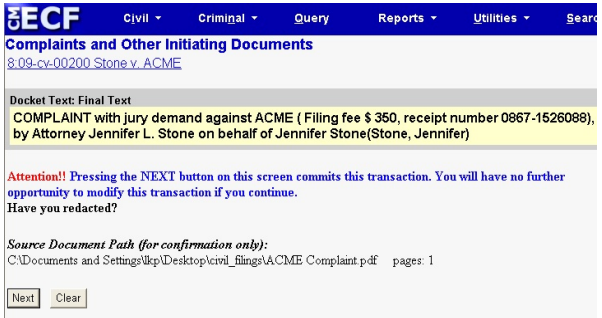
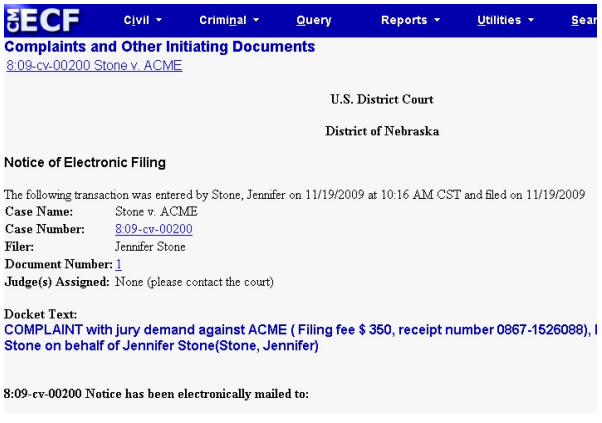
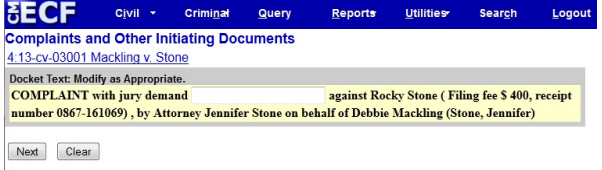
STEP	RESULT
1. Select the type of document to file. In this example, we will file a complaint. Click on Complaint , then click Next .	
2. The case number should automatically be displayed. Verify that it is correct, then click Next .	
3. Click the name of the party or parties that are filing the document. To select more than one name, hold down the Ctrl key on the keyboard while clicking each name. Click Next .	

STEP	RESULT
<p>4. Click the name of the party or parties that the complaint is against. Hold the Ctrl key while clicking multiple parties. Click Next.</p> <div data-bbox="228 464 773 657" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Note: Do NOT click the “All Defendants” option, as this will not list the party names in the docket text. Instead, use the Ctrl+click feature to highlight each name.</p> </div>	
<p>5. Click Browse to locate the PDF containing the complaint.</p>	
<p>6. In the File Upload window, verify that you have selected the correct document by right-clicking the mouse button on the PDF. From the quick menu, click Open. Adobe Acrobat will launch and open the PDF. View it to verify that it is the correct document.</p>	

STEP	RESULT
<p>7. Once you are sure you have the correct document, close the Adobe Acrobat window and click Open in the File Upload dialog box.</p> <p>The file path will now be in the Main Document field.</p> <p>8. If there are no attachments to the complaint, click Next.</p> <p>If you have attachments, click the Browse button to locate the appropriate PDF files and enter a Category and/or Description.</p> <p>Note: For more information on filing attachments, see the separate Adding Attachments procedure.</p>	
<p>9. If the complaint contains a jury demand, click the with jury demand radio button, then click Next.</p>	

STEP	RESULT
<p>10. Click Next to bypass the deadline screen.</p>	
<p>11. If the complaint is filed on behalf of the USA, or with an Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees, type N in the box and skip to step 15, otherwise type Y.</p> <p>Click Next.</p>	
<p>12. The filing fee is displayed. Click Next.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Do not use your browser's back button after this point.</p>	

STEP	RESULT
<p>13. You can either pay with a checking account number (Option 1) or by Credit Card (option 2). Fill out the payment screen for the option you choose. Fields with a red asterisk are required fields.</p>	
<p>14. If you wish to receive an e-mail confirmation of the payment transaction, enter your e-mail address in the fields provided. Be sure to check the box authorizing the charge to your account.</p> <p>Click Submit Payment.</p>	
<p>15. If necessary, further describe the complaint using the field provided. Click Next.</p> <p>(Examples: “with request for class action”, or “with request for Temporary</p>	

STEP	RESULT
<i>Restraining Order.”)</i>	
16. Click Next to submit the complaint to the court.	 <p>ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search</p> <p>Complaints and Other Initiating Documents 8:09-cv-00200 Stone v. ACME</p> <p>Docket Text: Final Text COMPLAINT with jury demand against ACME (Filing fee \$ 350, receipt number 0867-1526088), by Attorney Jennifer L. Stone on behalf of Jennifer Stone(Stone, Jennifer)</p> <p>Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue. Have you redacted?</p> <p>Source Document Path (for confirmation only): C:\Documents and Settings\Jkp\Desktop\civil_filings\ACME Complaint.pdf pages: 1</p> <p>Next Clear</p>
17. The screen depicted at the right confirms that ECF has registered your transaction and the pleading is now an official court document. <u>Note:</u> The Notice of Electronic Filing is your proof of filing or file stamp. The court strongly urges you to save it to a file or print it in order to retain a copy of the notice in your personal files.	 <p>ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search</p> <p>Complaints and Other Initiating Documents 8:09-cv-00200 Stone v. ACME</p> <p>U.S. District Court District of Nebraska</p> <p>Notice of Electronic Filing</p> <p>The following transaction was entered by Stone, Jennifer on 11/19/2009 at 10:16 AM CST and filed on 11/19/2009 Case Name: Stone v. ACME Case Number: 8:09-cv-00200 Filer: Jennifer Stone Document Number: 1 Judge(s) Assigned: None (please contact the court)</p> <p>Docket Text: COMPLAINT with jury demand against ACME (Filing fee \$ 350, receipt number 0867-1526088), by Attorney Jennifer L. Stone on behalf of Jennifer Stone(Stone, Jennifer)</p> <p>8:09-cv-00200 Notice has been electronically mailed to:</p>
18. Now that you have filed the complaint and paid any necessary fees, the court will draw judges for the case. You should receive e-mail notification of the judges assigned by the close of the next business day.	 <p>ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Logout</p> <p>Complaints and Other Initiating Documents 4:13-cv-03001 Mackling v. Stone</p> <p>Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate. COMPLAINT with jury demand against Rocky Stone (Filing fee \$ 400, receipt number 0867-161069), by Attorney Jennifer Stone on behalf of Debbie Mackling (Stone, Jennifer)</p> <p>Next Clear</p>

CONGRATULATIONS! The case opening process is complete.